



NEWS FOR THE NURTURING CHILD CARE PROFESSIONAL

Need a Last Minute Clock Hour Connection?

If you are an early childhood educator seeking to obtain clock hour credits to fulfill state-mandated training requirements, or are working toward the Child Development Associate (CDA) National Credential, you're in luck. Texas Cooperative Extension's Web-based Early Childhood Educator Training Program offers a wide variety of online courses that are convenient, flexible, affordable, and research-based. Our

online courses are developed by Texas A&M University System faculty and meet the minimum standards established by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). All courses count toward the 120 clock hours of formal child care education required to obtain the CDA National Credential. Please visit the website for details. <http://extensiononline.tamu.edu> (Click on Courses.)

To learn more about how to enroll in and/or purchase a course, please visit the website. At this time, courses must be purchased online using a major credit card. To provide maximum security to our customers, Texas Cooperative Extension utilizes VeriSign; therefore, no credit card information is stored in our database.



(Continued on Page 2)

TRAINING CALENDAR

Date	Location
March 1, 2008	Liberty
May 17, 2008	Cleveland
July 12, 2008	Dayton
October 4, 2008	Liberty



See Page 3, 4, & 5 for more information.

**Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Liberty County**

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☺ **Have Questions?**
☺ **Need Resources?**

Contact me, Alexis Cordova.

I am the Family & Consumer Sciences Agent in Liberty County. I have a Bachelors degree in Child Development and a Masters degree in Family and Child Studies. Thank you for supporting positive safe development of young children!!



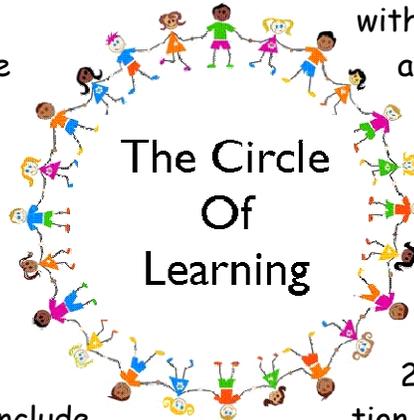
liberty@ag.tamu.edu

Child Care Provider Training



There is a **FREE** Child Care Provider Training Conference offered to all child care professionals. The training will be **March 1st, 2008** from **8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.** at the Liberty Church of Christ located at 3201 N. Main in **Liberty, TX.**

Topics that will be covered include involving and communicating with parents, childhood obesity, meal planning, and more... Upon completion of this training, each participant will receive a certificate



The Circle
Of
Learning

with their name, training details and a statement indicating the successful completion of **5 clock hours**. If CEUs are needed please indicate that on the registration form. Registration opens January 16th and ends February 22nd at 5:00 p.m. Registration information and forms available at your county Extension Office and online at liberty.tamu.edu (click on Events, then find the link for the Child Care Provider Training Conference).

FREE

Web-Based Early Childhood Providers Training Program Continued...

Most Courses are \$5.00 per clock hour, unless otherwise indicated. Course Listing for Child Care Providers:

- Controlling for Combustion Pollutants in Child Care Settings
- Reducing Children's Exposure to Asbestos and Lead
- Testing for Radon
- How to Control for and Remove Biological Pollutants
- Minimizing Potential Health Problems Associated with Household Products and Organic Gases
- Introduction to Child Safety Seats for Child Care Providers
- Keeping Kids Safe - Emergency Planning for Child-Care Facilities (**FREE**)
- Understanding Infant and Toddler Development (**\$10.00**)
- The Value of Play for Preschool Children

- Establishing Positive Partnerships with Parents
 - Fostering Children's Self Esteem
 - Creating a Literacy-Rich Early Childhood Program
 - Helping Children Resolve Peer Conflict.
 - Promoviendo Actividades de Alfabetización en Centros de Lugares Infantiles
- The courses follow a similar format

1. Introduction and Identification of Course Objectives.
2. Pre-test. Multiple choice questionnaire related to the course content.
3. Course Content.
4. Interactive Activity.
5. Post-test. Complete a 10-item multiple-choice questionnaire.
6. Print Certificate. If you pass the test with a 70% or higher, you receive credit for the course. Simply print off the Certificate of Completion and save for your records.

WHY CHOOSE AN ONLINE COURSE FROM US?

- 1. Convenience:** All courses can be completed via the internet. Once you complete a course, simply print off the certificate of completion and keep for your records.
- 2. Flexibility:** Register and take courses anytime, day or night ... wherever you have access to a computer with an internet connection.
- 3. Affordable:** Our online courses are very reasonably priced. In fact, some are offered at no cost to participants.
- 4. Research-Based:** Courses are based on the latest research in each subject matter area.

Let's Talk PARENTS... Professionally



TALKING TO PARENTS ABOUT DIFFICULT SITUATIONS:

- Always start the conversation on a positive note.
- Describe the behavior or situation in a matter-of-fact way.
- Do not label the child with terms such as aggressive, bully, rowdy, shy, or selfish. Instead try "Sally hit several children today."
- Tell the parent how you are handling the problem during the day.
- Ask the parent not to punish the child for incidents that occurred at the center, but try to work on causes, and to respond to problems that occur at home.
- Keep the parent informed.

RESPONDING TO PARENT COMPLAINTS:

- Listen to the entire complaint without interrupting or defending.
- Try not to react defensively or in anger. Try to communicate in a clear, level manner.
- Ask for clarification until you understand exactly what the concern is.
- Rephrase the concern in your own words to be sure you completely understand the problem.
- Express your understanding of the parent's feelings.
- Try to reach an agreement.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- If the complaints continue and there seems to be no common ground, consider referring the parent elsewhere.



GOOD COMMUNICATION RULES:

- Always greet the parent and child cheerfully by name.
- Emphasize the positive.
- Never discuss problems with the child in front of the child.
- Know your limits. Be honest about what you can and cannot do.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Always welcome parental visits.
- Always keep communications absolutely confidential.

"HOW DO I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING DURING MY CHILD'S DAY?"
EVER HEAR PARENTS SAY THIS? ENCOURAGE UNANNOUNCED VISITS, SHARE THROUGH: NEWSLETTERS, WRITTEN NOTES, POSTED LESSON PLANS, PHOTOGRAPHS OF ACTIVITIES, PHONE CALLS, EMAILS, OR JUST TAKING TIME FOR CONVERSATION, AND ENCOURAGE HELP IN THE CLASSROOM!



THE STATE OF TEXAS CHILDREN 2007

Center for Public Policy Priorities has recently released *The State of Texas Children 2007*, our annual KIDS COUNT data book on the well-being of children in every county in Texas. Among this year's findings, state-wide, maternal and infant health are improving, as more women are receiving prenatal care and teen births are continuing to decline. At the same time, child poverty is up for the fifth straight year, unemployment has increased, and Texas continues to have the highest rates of uninsured children in the nation.

In conjunction with the release, we also have updated our online databases. To view a snapshot of the most recent data for your county or to order a copy of the report, go to www.cppp.org/factbook07. To create maps, graphs, or to view all of the data ever collected for the Texas KIDS COUNT Project, go to <http://www.kidscount.org/cgi-bin/cliks.cgi>.

Birth Order May Have Affects on Classroom Dynamics...

Where a child places in the birth order can have an effect on how they see themselves. Research on birth order, sometimes referred to as ordinal position, shows that first born children are more likely to go to college than children in any other position in the family. Parents and caregivers should attempt to help each child to see themselves as unique individuals and avoid comparisons with siblings or others.

The middle child often seems to have the most negative impressions of his/her lot in life. One approach to help

middle children reframe things is to point out that in a sense they have the best of both worlds. They are the youngest to the older sibling and the oldest to the younger sibling. Therefore they are both a big brother/sister and a little brother/sister. Younger children always want to be able to do the things older siblings are allowed to do. And older siblings may feel that the younger siblings get away with things they were not able to when they were the same age.

Only children usually want to be

adults, and so don't relate to peers very well. When they become adults, they often believe they've finally "made it" and can now relate better to adults as peers. During their formative years, only children live primarily in the world of adults. They must learn how to operate in the big people's world as well as how to entertain themselves. Thus they often become very creative in their endeavors.

Below you will find *typical* characteristics that will not apply to *all* children in *every* family.

Only Child	First Child	Second Child	Middle Child of Three ¹	Youngest Child
<p>Pampered and spoiled.</p> <p>Feels incompetent because adults are more capable.</p> <p>Is center of attention; often enjoys position. May feel special.</p> <p>Self-centered.</p> <p>Relies on service from others rather than own efforts.</p> <p>Feels unfairly treated when doesn't get own way. May refuse to cooperate.</p> <p>Plays "divide and conquer" to get own way.</p> <p>May have poor peer relations as child but better relations as adult.²</p> <p>Pleases other only when wants to.</p> <p>Creative.³</p>	<p>Is only child for period of time; used to being center of attention.</p> <p>Believes must gain and hold superiority over other children.</p> <p>Being right, controlling often important.</p> <p>May respond to birth of second child by feeling unloved and neglected.</p> <p>Strives to keep or regain parents' attention through conformity.</p> <p>If this failed, chooses to misbehave.</p> <p>May develop competent, responsible behavior or become very discouraged.</p> <p>Sometime strives to protect and help others.</p> <p>Strives to please.</p>	<p>Never has parents' undivided attention.</p> <p>Always has sibling ahead who's more advanced.</p> <p>Acts as if in race, trying to catch up or overtake first child. If first child is "good," second may become "bad." Develops abilities first child doesn't exhibit. If first child successful, may feel uncertain of self and abilities.</p> <p>May be rebel. Often doesn't like position.</p> <p>Feels "squeezed" if third child is born.</p> <p>May push down other siblings.</p>	<p>Has neither rights of oldest nor privileges of youngest. Feels life is unfair.</p> <p>Feels unloved, left out, "squeezed."</p> <p>Feels doesn't have place in family.</p> <p>Becomes discouraged and "problem child" or elevates self by pushing down other siblings.</p> <p>Is adaptable. Learns to deal with both oldest and youngest sibling.</p>	<p>Behaves like only child. Feels every one bigger and more capable.</p> <p>Expects others to do things, make decisions, take responsibility.</p> <p>Feels smallest and weakest. May not be taken seriously.</p> <p>Becomes boss of family in getting service and own way.</p> <p>Develops feelings of inferiority or becomes "speeder" and overtakes older siblings.</p> <p>Remains "The Baby." Places others in service.</p> <p>If youngest of three, often allies with oldest child against middle child.</p>

(Adapted from Don Dinkmeyer, Gary D. McKay, and Don Dinkmeyer, Jr., *Parent Education Leader's Manual* Coral Springs, F.; CMTI Press, 1978)



Circle Games build important developmental skills

Can you sing and dance "The Hokey Pokey"? Who knew that such a silly circle game could promote strength in a child's trunk and arms? Circle games can also foster children's balance, bilateral coordination auditory skills, and concept development (such as the use of prepositions). These skills supports *literacy*.

Circle Games typically occur during circle time (also called group time or meeting). This time offers daily opportunities for adults to enhance children's normal development, while all the participants have fun.

Why circle games? When used often and appropriately, circle games can help children develop skills in sensory perception, gross motor, fine motor, language, and social and emotional areas.

Take time to observe in classrooms to learn new songs, finger plays and games. Find a good book at the library or bookstore to add even more circle games to your repertoire.

Many different ethnic groups have traditional games that can enrich children's understanding of their

own heritage and that of other people's. Stretch yourself! Learn something new from a less familiar culture, and then teach it to the children.

But before you try a new activity with a group, think about what this specific game or song will involve. Is it too easy or too hard for the children in your care? What developmentally healthy concepts can be taught using these movements? Which skills will children practice in this activity? With a little planning, you can make circle games educational as well as fun.

Collect props like scarves, rhythm sticks, hats, shakers, and bells.

Make cards with illustrated titles of songs and games, so the children can take turns picking a card to choose the groups' next activity.

Remember that children sometimes like to be in charge. They tend to choose their favorite songs again and again, so rotate your cards to match the seasons, keeping children's interest high.

Concepts for Circle Games:

- ☺ Age, height, weight
- ☺ Animals: insects, pets birds
- ☺ Directions: up, down, in, out
- ☺ Feelings all people have
- ☺ Geology: gravel, rocks, soil
- ☺ Plants: Flowers, grass, trees
- ☺ Shapes in everyday objects
- ☺ Time, clocks, calendar
- ☺ Types of transportation
- ☺ Weather: storms, rain, hail



Circle Time Songs

Open, Shut Them

Open, shut them, Open shut them
Give a clap! CLAP!
Open, shut them, Open, shut them,
Put them in your lap.
Sneak them, creep them,
Creep them, sneak them,
Right up to your chin.
Open wide your little mouth.
But do not let them in!

Circle Gathering Songs

Circle Right Now

(Sung to the tune of TV's "Rawhide")
Meeting, Meeting, Meeting
Let's go to the meeting,
Circle, circle, circle, right now!
Welcome to our meeting,
We need you at our meeting,
Circle, circle, circle, right now!

Step Right Up

It's circle time,
Step right up, sit right down!
It's talking time.
Step right up, sit right down!
It's listening time.
Step right up, sit right down!
It's meeting time, right now.



Grandparents Raising GRANDkidz

Conference for Grandparents / Relatives Raising Kin Children



RAPs (or Relatives As Parents) are individuals who are raising grandchildren or other kin children. This is a rapidly expanding family reality in Houston! Think about it! Any one of us might suddenly find ourselves needing to care for a kin child because his or her parent(s) is (are) unable to do so. One unexpected turn of events and one becomes a Relative Parent! The numbers of RAPs are increasing daily and in every part of Houston's population! Services, however, for this group of generous caregivers are sorely lacking in our city and state!

For this reason, a group of Relative Parents raising kin children and 7 local organizations have come together to form the RAP Coalition. The mission of this RAP Coalition is to address the huge need for more and improved services for the kin families of the Greater Houston area.

Saturday, February 2nd, 2008 the RAP Coalition is holding the first ever Houston-wide RAP Conference!! 200 RAPs are expected; registrations will be limited to 200. Pre-Conference registration is required. (See information below)

This totally FREE Conference will be a tremendous opportunity for Relative Parents! There will be wonderful speakers, planned opportunities to interact with other RAPs, lunch, information tables from twenty resources and workshops on topics of great interest to RAPs!

Place: Central Presbyterian Church
(in the center of Houston)
3788 Richmond Blvd.
Houston, TX

Easy access and easy, free parking. Minimal walking.

Date: Saturday, February 2, 2008

Hours: 9:30am - 3:30pm

For: Relative Parents only

Required: Pre-registration (See Below)

Presentations will cover such topics as Legal Issues, Parenting Today, Children with Special Needs, Self-Care, Advocating for Ourselves.

Conferences such as this are known to provide a tremendous benefit and lift to the spirit. There can be no question that RAPs need opportunities to interact with other RAPS and to be exposed to all the wonderful information to be provided through this event!

To Register Send: Your name, mailing address with zip code, your phone number, and the number of kin children you are raising by MAIL to: Relatives As Parents Program, University of Houston (SSC #210), Houston, TX 77204-3025 **OR** by EMAIL to agrindon@uh.edu For questions, call (713) 743-5491 after 1/2/08.

Choose activities that enhance fine motor development!

Uncooked Finger Paint

- 1 cup flour
- tempera or poster paint
- 1/2 cup water

Mix ingredients in a bowl until thick as ketchup. Store in an airtight container.



Activities for Dough & Clay

- Cut
- Emboss
- Flatten
- Imprint
- Mold
- Pat
- Plop
- Poke
- Pound
- Roll out
- Sculpt
- Slice
- Squeeze
- Stretch
- Weigh



Materials & Equipment

- Water Toys
- Build Toys
- Small Cars & Trucks
- Checkers
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Clay and Dough
- Paper of all types
- Chalk, crayons, markers
- Paint and brushes
- Paste & Non-toxic glue
- Rulers
- Scissors
- Ribbons, String, Yarn
- Sand and Pebbles
- Buttons

Water Play Actions

- Blowing
- Dripping
- Drying
- Measuring
- Mixing
- Pouring
- Shaking
- Soaking
- Splashing
- Sprinkling
- Squeezing
- Straining
- Wetting
- Wringing



Improving Lives. Improving Texas.

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Newsletter by

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**Family & Consumer Sciences Agent
for Liberty County**

If you have any questions or need additional information or training, please contact the Extension Office, located in the Liberty County Annex Building, across the hall from the Drivers License Office, in Liberty.

Extension program serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting are encouraged to contact the Liberty County Extension Office at 936-336-4558, ext. 221 as soon as possible to advise us of the auxiliary aid or service that you will require.